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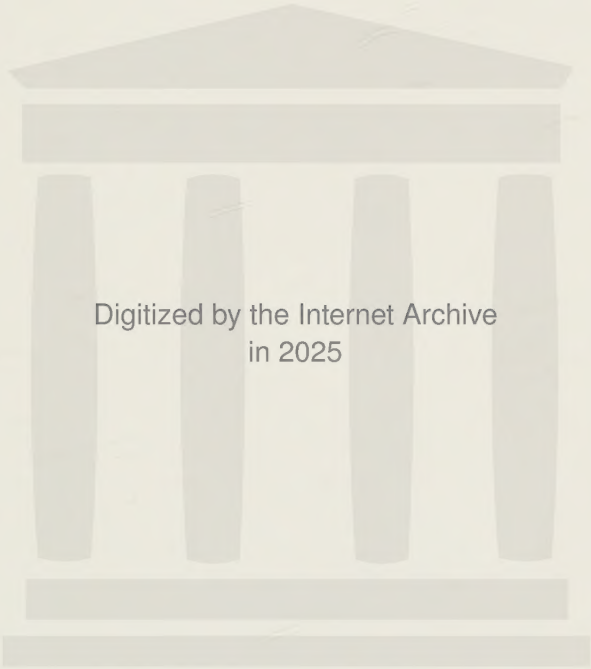
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THE FIRST QUARTO OF HAMLET IN THE LIGHT OF THE STAGE

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By
GERTRUDE SOUTHWICK KINGSLAND

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University

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TO
MARY E. SOUTHWICK

PREFACE

No literary subject in recent years has aroused more interest and speculation than the origin and purpose of the First Quarto of *Hamlet*. It has been studied from the point of view of the stylist, the commentator, the historian, and the bibliographer. Research has brought to light many interesting facts, but scholars are still divided in their opinions of what this Quarto represents. Some hold that it is an early sketch which was later developed into the Quarto of 1604; others believe it represents an actor's version excised from the completed text.

I have endeavored to support the latter theory by making a comparison of the First Quarto with the acting versions of Hamlet from Betterton's day to our own. I have incorporated my findings in the following pages. The five parts of the Introduction are abstracts of the five chapters of an unpublished manuscript which treats in detail the subjects specified and forms a basis for my concluding chapter which is here printed in full.

I wish to make acknowledgement at this time of assistance given me. My first interest in the early Quartos was aroused by Talcott Williams, who suggested the point of view of the stage for a new observation of these difficult editions. The effect of the actor, the theater, and the audience on the acting versions was emphasized for me in the lecture room of Brander Matthews. I am indebted to Ashley H. Thorndike for much constructive criticism, and to William P. Trent and George Philip Krapp for valuable suggestions. I wish to thank Mr. George Watson Cole who

graciously placed the *Hamlet* treasures of the Huntington Library before me, and Mr. W. A. White who generously permitted me to take a number of his rare Quartos to my study for comparison. I am grateful for letters received from Sir Sidney Lee, Dean Arthur Hobson Quinn, Mr. Owen Wister, and Mr. Walter Hampden; for courtesies extended by Margaret Anglin, Miss Henrietta Bartlett, James K. Hackett, and E. H. Sothern; and for special assistance in the libraries of New York by Mr. Biglow, Miss Ruth Grannis, and Miss Isadore Mudge.

The loyal devotion to Shakespeare of scholar, book collector, actor, bibliographer, and librarian has given me entree not only to archives of valuable book treasures but also to the stage during performances and to actors' studios where I have examined private prompt-books and listened to the actor's exposition and reading of the Shakespeare lines. I regret that I cannot more fully acknowledge my gratitude and appreciation. I offer the following pages in partial return for the courtesies and assistance I have received.

INTRODUCTION

Acting and Reading Versions

I

Acting and reading versions of Shakespeare are distinguished by their outward appearance and by the construction and content of their texts. Each appeals to the world of thought but through different media of expression. Each has a pristine purity of Shakespeare lines though the divergence in quantity is greater than it was when the Folio of 1623 first made clear the contrast between the bulky volume intended to be read and studied, a monument, and the Quartos, the offspring and instrument of the stage and actor. The monument was graced with memorial poems, dignified with a dedication to noblemen, adorned with a portrait of the dramatist, and prefaced with an appeal "TO THE GREAT VARIETY OF READERS from the most able to him that can but spell." The Quarto had its front page clearly printed to catch the eye of the playgoer, playwright, or play actor as he passed the stall of the stationer.

The character of the workmanship expended on the two kinds of versions has differentiated them through the centuries. The scholar-editor in preparing his text for the library has divided the dramas into acts and scenes, made a selective choice of words and lines, corrected apparent mistakes, added omitted passages, and supported the whole with notes and critical essays. The actor-adapter, on the contrary, cutting the full play to reduce its bulk, and seeking rapid action and dramatic intensity, has retained only

such lines of characterization, action, and episode as he chose for stage presentation, has transferred passages to heighten effects, and has, at times, even supplanted the thought with extraneous material to meet the tastes of the period.

The modern reading versions, which are composites of the texts of the First Folio and the early Quartos, present dramas with which one is familiar in the library but which differ from the Shakespeare one sees on the stage. The reading version has been made adequate at the cost of repetitions, the acting version has been made brief at the cost of omissions. The modern acting versions, however, of some of the plays are nearer their originals today than at any time in the history of the particular drama. This concurrence of dramatic passages is not only interesting in its reflection on the art of the actor and the taste of the audience but significant in determining for certain editions of plays their date and purpose. The concurrence suggests that an absolute art governs the stage and that the twentieth-century actor and audience respond to the themes and thoughts as Shakespeare presented them. Especially in the *Hamlet* texts, where this concurrence has held through the centuries, we may draw inferences concerning the date at which Shakespeare completed the drama and also, possibly, the purpose of its quarto publications.

II

While the reading versions have changed only by legitimate accretions, the acting versions have been altered to meet the changing public taste, the varying abilities of the actors, and the evolving theaters. The length of all the plays except *Macbeth* and *The Comedy of Errors* has always

been necessarily shortened to bring the performance within the theatrical hours which are demanded by the response of the audience. The themes, however, because of their universal appeal have remained the same.

The acting dramas made their greatest deviation from the original text in the latter part of the seventeenth century, but since that time they have been gradually coming back through many so called restorations until the twentieth century finds them closely parallel with the originals. In the days of Betterton, when the glamor of music and spectacle swept over the playhouse, when flattery to royalty and women became the fashion, when classical form stiffened all expression with artificiality, when effeminacy insinuated its degenerating effect, the actors' texts became grossly changed. They were, moreover, affected by even more direct influences, such as women actors, moveable scenery, elaborated mechanical appliances for stage movements, and permanent orchestras, influences which tempted the adapter to alter the character of some of the plays making of some pageants, of others operas, and of others entire transformations in thought and action. The great achievement, however, of Betterton and his managers through this period was that they brought back to the stage in some form most of Shakespeare's tragedies and a few of the comedies.

During the half century that followed Betterton's time there was an awakened, growing interest in the reading version, an interest which reacted on the theater and demanded the performance of plays long unseen and the restoration of originals long buried under gross perversions. Garrick arose in this atmosphere and became the dominant theatrical figure, extolling the great dramatist, decrying the

mutilations of the Betterton period, but inconsistently himself violating the Shakespeare text in the acting versions he arranged for performance. He did, however, not only add impetus to the general revival of interest in the original texts, but stimulated a new reverence in manipulating them for the acting version.

Not until the middle of the nineteenth century came the epoch of the true restoration of Shakespeare on the stage. This fulfillment of earlier ideals was not the accomplishment of one actor, manager, or playwright. It came after much experimentation with the text, experimentation which has presented strange garbled versions, which has won temporary glory as well as temporary shame, and which remains in the history of the acting version casting illuminating reflection on audiences as well as on actors. After all these vicissitudes of the acting versions, their texts seem to have arrived at a state of purity which neither fashion nor prejudice, sumptuous spectacle nor Elizabethan simplicity, outdoor setting nor interior ostentation, is able to swerve from their original spirit and thought.

Alterations Pertaining to Characters

Although the Shakespeare on the stage today has no interpolated lines, there is made necessarily to shorten the time of a presentation an abridgment which often involves an economic consideration of the size of the cast. When to the specified characters, which in *Julius Caesar* are 35, in *Richard III* 38, and in *Henry V* 40, we add the attendants, the mob, the soldiers, the citizens, all the supernumeraries that the play requires, we can easily see the great expense in

equipment and salaries which the full quota of the cast would incur. To lessen this expense, rôles are eliminated or doubled, or even at times quadrupled and the text compressed accordingly to satisfy the situation.

Those characters which are retained among the dramatis personae are often altered by the omission of episodes in which they are a part and by the reduction of their own lines and of those spoken about them. From the same *Hamlet* original, Booth's Danish Prince comes before the public as the rose and expectancy of state, the glass of fashion, the mould of form, the son reverent before his father's spirit and never profane or vulgar in his most impassioned conversations, the courtier, the soldier, and the scholar; Fechter's Hamlet rants on the stage, is fat and scant of breath, has much of the Tudor temper and ruthlessness, and is physical with the predominating passions of the brute. The two characters differ because of the selection of lines made by the actors although both texts have only pure Shakespeare lines. In a like manner the characterization is affected by the stage business and the episodes which are cast aside or retained. Characterization is especially altered by the lines excised to adapt the text to the physical ability and endurance of the actor. Characterization is emphasized by increasing the proportion of the lines of certain rôles by the reduction of the lines of other characters. This procedure in favor of the leading rôle has been carried, at times, under the domination of the star system almost to a deformity of the text. In the elimination of characters or their alteration by excisions, a rearrangement of incidents is often entailed. Such excisions in every case must necessarily reduce the psychological interest which attaches to the

characters in the reading versions in the fulness of their lines and episodes. But this loss of psychological interest is compensated for upon the stage by the more rapid action and the more salient presentation of characters which the abridged texts afford.

Alterations Pertaining to Scenes

As characters are emphasized, lessened, or eliminated by the lines excised in the acting texts; so scenes are amalgamated, omitted, or transformed according to the story the drama is to tell, the financial appropriation for the cost of production, and the physical condition under which the drama is to be played. With the evolution of the stage from the deep bare apron and small inner recess of the Elizabethan theater to the picture-frame stage of today with curtains, scenery, and marvelous lighting facilities, the scenes have followed, expanding to the opportunities offered and submitting to the restrictions put upon them. They have at times threatened to lose their lines in spectacle; they have found a new continuity possible; and they have recognized that some of their parts are entirely obsolete.

As most of the dramas commonly acted have more than 20 scenes, *Antony and Cleopatra* having 42, the scenes in the acting versions are necessarily reduced for economic reasons as well as for time. In the abridgment of plays by excising and compressing scenes, those carrying the enveloping action, like the battles and political intrigues in *Antony and Cleopatra* and the Norwegian complications with Denmark in *Hamlet*, are often the first to be cut away. Scenes presenting secondary plots are either eliminated or greatly reduced, as are usually the casket-choosing scenes in *The*

Merchant of Venice and the scenes concerning the successor to Macbeth. Descriptive scenes are sometimes compressed into one, as the storm scenes in *King Lear* which are so compressed by Booth. Scenes are often replaced by stage pictures or tableaux like those in the Mansfield production of *Henry V*. Descriptive passages are sometimes omitted because they demand in a realistic setting scenery and properties which would distract the attention of the audience.

Certain technical scenes, which in the evolution of the stage are no longer necessary are omitted or curtailed, as those short front scenes which offered an opportunity for the removing or setting up on the back stage of heavy or elaborate properties; and at the close of the tragedies those final scenes which provide for the removal of the dead bodies.

In the return to scenic simplicity apparent in the twentieth century, there is more time for the actor, less expense for the producer, broader sway for the imagination of the audience, in fact, more conformity to the plays as Shakespeare produced them. As the construction in the stage changes and the necessity for abbreviating most of the plays abides, the scenes will continue to be subject to the red pencil of the adapter although their abridgment may mean a coalescing, a compressing, and a curtailing rather than an absolute excision of scenes.

Minor Alterations

When the plays are to be shortened, *Hamlet* suggests excision of the enveloping action; *King Lear*, the compression of scenes; *Julius Caesar*, the doubling and exclusion of rôles; and *The Tempest* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, the

substitution of spectacle. In all of the dramas, however, minor alterations are made, consisting chiefly of omissions which leave a more direct plot by removing encumbering lines and passages. Among such excisions are lines suited for the library but of little value on the stage, and those especially adapted to the audience for which the play was written but with no lasting appeal for the later play goers. Although local color attracts in a current play, it becomes commonplace to a second generation and meaningless to a third. Provincialisms like local color become vague to a later generation. Similes and metaphors are a delight in the library but when spoken on the stage often blur the thought with a confusion of images. A repetition which tells in narrative an action which has already been performed may, like a parenthetical expression, be dispensed with, and the progress of the plot will continue unimpeded. Many of the puns have lost their significance through a change in pronunciation, or by the words becoming archaic, while others have an unpleasant vulgarity attached. Vulgarity, whether in puns, songs, asides, or parenthetical expressions, was written for the coarse mirth of those bystanders in the pit of the Elizabethan theater who in the modern theater have been relegated to a distance from the stage, a distance which precludes the easy use of this variety of entertainment. Passages rendered vague by superstitions not generally known today, and allusions to history or literature with which the modern audience is not familiar are omitted. Enumerations are tiresome on the stage and usually omitted. Extended conversations and prolonged speeches, which are necessarily shortened to economize time, yield up their philosophic and didactic portions. Songs which in no way

forward the action are only retained when they lend the desired atmosphere to the scene. Obsolete words when they are able to carry a valuable significance are retained; but when they give either a mistaken or vague idea they are removed taking with them often from the text the immediate passage with which they appear. The same may be said of archaic words and phrases. Appellatives are ephemeral expressions which have a vogue for a period but becoming archaic or commonplace are omitted. Profane oaths which in Shakespeare's day passed under government restriction, are retained or excised in modern times according to the taste of the actor.

Alterations are sometimes made as corrections in the diction, but for the most part the modern audience accepts as it would any convention the Elizabethan disregard of the cases of pronouns, of the agreement of verbs with their subjects, of the interchanging of adverbs and adjectives, of the strange verb forms, and of the doubling of negatives, comparatives, and superlatives.

All these minor alterations, while they do not add much to the economy of time or money as do the alterations made on characters and scenes, yet are a strong agency in clarifying the text for a direct stage production and in revealing the artistic manipulation of a text by an adapter.

By a detailed study of the history of the acting texts and of the alterations made by the adapters, we observe that these texts, which have been excised from the reading versions, have retained through the centuries characteristics peculiar to their purpose of telling a story in action. Although the acting texts have been altered under the in-

fluence of the audience, the actor, and the theater; although they have been shortened to economize time and rearranged to eliminate characters and to compress scenes; and although the texts have been shorn of many non-essentials, such as puns, poetic conceits, and passages of local color; yet through these manipulations of the adapters the original Shakespeare dramas have survived and are acted on the modern stage from an abbreviated but pure text. Furthermore, the *Hamlet* text, which has been more studied than any other, has never deviated far from the tragedy as Shakespeare wrote it, although it has been variously cut to emphasize many different interpretations of the Prince and his problem.

The Hamlet First Quarto

An old volume found one hundred years ago at Barton, England, precipitated Shakespearean scholarship into a discussion which is not yet closed. This volume, a rudely bound book containing twelve old plays in quarto, was sold two years after its discovery to the Duke of Devonshire for two hundred and forty pounds. The book commanded this price because one of the plays was a unique edition of *Hamlet*, published in 1603, evidently pirated, and differing from any *Hamlet* known.

In the possession of the Duke of Devonshire, the *Hamlet* treasure was removed from its rude binding, the precious leaves were inlaid in heavy paper, and the whole was encased in handsomely tooled light blue morocco. Thus carefully preserved, the Quarto was later sold with the Devonshire collection to Mr. Henry E. Huntington and crossed the Atlantic to find its library home in America.

The little blue volume has arisen above any estimated money value not only because of the growing interest in first editions but more because of the problems this particular edition poses.

Thirty years after the discovery of this First Quarto of *Hamlet*, a book dealer, Rooney, at Trinity College, Dublin, purchased for a shilling a *Hamlet* Quarto from a poor student who had brought the little defaced pamphlet as a memento from his home in a midland county of England. As the first leaf of the pamphlet was wanting, Rooney did not discover that his purchase was unusual until, collating the text, he noticed the name "Corambis" where he was accustomed to read "Old Man Polonius." Rooney had happened upon a second copy of the 1603 *Hamlet*. After offering it to the Duke of Devonshire, to Halliwell, and to J. W. Jones of the British Museum, Rooney sold the Quarto for seventy pounds to a Mr. Boone, who resold it within three months to Halliwell for 120 pounds. Although Mr. Jones had said that the British Museum never purchased imperfect books, this Quarto was finally purchased for that institution. Though this second discovery was minus the first page of the text, it had the last page, which the copy found in 1603 lacked. Thus the two texts supplementing each other, a complete copy of the 1603 *Hamlet* became available. Furthermore, the 1856 discovery emphasized the interest which the 1823 discovery had aroused.

This interest centered naturally in the differences between the 1603 Quarto and the texts of the Quarto of 1604 and of the Folio of 1623, differences of characterization, names, episodes, and construction. The First Quarto, which is only about half the length of the Second, shows much less

complexity in the characters. Hamlet and Claudius are more direct; Laertes, slightly altered, is less violent; and Gertrude, more simple, is, in fact, entirely innocent of any complicity in the murder of King Hamlet. In the only additional scene in the First Quarto, one between Gertrude and Horatio, the Queen has no new characterization; she is the same fond mother fearful for the welfare of her son. Among the differences in names Polonius is in the First Quarto Corambis, Reynaldo is Montano, Osric is the Braggart Gentleman, Francisco is merely the Centinal, the Player King and the Player Queen are the Duke and the Duchess, Gonzago is Albertus, and Laertes is Leartes. The variants in the names of the courtiers are merely misspellings which change through the text. A few incidents also differ: in the First Quarto Yorrick's skull has lain in the ground twelve years instead of twenty-three; Leartes has been home for the King's funeral, not for the coronation of Claudius; the King, not Leartes, suggests poisoning the foil. In the construction of the First Quarto the death soliloquy and the following dialogue with Ophelia are placed in the second act immediately before Hamlet's fishmonger ridicule of Polonius; the four lines spoken by the ghost of King Hamlet's great love for Gertrude are a part of Hamlet's speech contrasting the two pictures before his mother in the closet; and the dozen lines where Hamlet likens Guildenstern and Rosencrantz to nuts mouthed by an ape, and to sponges that glean and give when squeezed, which are transferred from IV. ii. to III. ii. 389, becoming a part of Hamlet's reproof of his friends with the episode of the pipes.

The long passages in the Second Quarto which are not in the First are the 17 lines of the portent of the ghost and

the reference to the harbingers that preceded the fates in Rome, I. i. 108-125; the 22 lines spoken by Hamlet of the heavy-headed revel, a custom which brought on Denmark a disgrace among nations and was more honored in the breach than in the observance, and of a parallelism in this national condition to some men who have "a vicious mole of nature in them," I. iv. 17-38; the 67 lines, beginning with Hamlet's information that Fortinbras had advanced on the "little patch of ground" which the Poles had garrisoned, and closing with Hamlet's soliloquy on occasion spurring on to revenge, IV. iv. 9-66; the 13 lines where Laertes agrees if he may be the origin for the vengeance on Hamlet to follow the King's plans, IV. vii. 69-82; the 10 lines of the King on the effect of *would* and *should* in love and duty, IV. vii. 115-124; the forty lines of dialogue between Hamlet and Osric when Osric speaks praises for Laertes, V. ii. 110-150; and, finally, the 16 lines where the lord comes to Hamlet to inquire if he is going to meet Laertes for the duel, V. ii. 203-218.

The play scene is one of the most salient digressions in the First Quarto from the text of the Second. It is much shorter in the First Quarto and shows also a variance in literary style. The First Quarto, moreover, throughout its entire text has the grossest corruption in the diction; words are misspelled, misplaced, omitted; lines are distorted; meter and rythm are often lost; meaning in places is unintelligible; scenes are garbled; and passages are confused.

These differences between the First and Second Quartos vary little from the differences between the First Quarto and the First Folio. The 218 lines of the Second Quarto which are exclusive of those in the Folio appear at twenty-seven

places and vary in length from one word to fifty-eight lines. They cover Hamlet's moralizing on drunkeness and custom, Claudius' philosophy on delay, and Horatio's lines on apparitions. They bring forward in the Fourth Act Fortinbras' captain with his explanations and the passage revealing Hamlet's lack of filial duty, his procrastination in taking revenge, and his bewilderment over his vacillating nature and ineffectual powers. These are the same Second Quarto passages which are omitted in the First Quarto. In the First Quarto exclusive lines and words may for the most part be attributed to the imperfection of the work in obtaining the text. An exception, however, to this statement may be found in the unique scene between Gertrude and Horatio and in a few lines in the players scene. The notable passage found exclusively in the Folio is the conversation between Hamlet and the courtiers on the children's companies, II. ii. 352-379. If we waive these exclusive passages, the Second Quarto and the text printed nineteen years later are closely parallel not only in incidents and sequence of episodes but also in those descriptive and philosophical lines which nearly double the length of the text and characterize a drama written with the full illumination and comment appreciated in the library. While the First Quarto differs in a similar manner from both the Second Quarto and the Folio, it is characterized by its deformity and its brevity, and also by those internal changes consequent upon its brevity.

These differences between the First Quarto and the later editions, emphasizing the characteristics of the First Quarto, have elicited investigation, reasoning, speculation, and minute textual criticism from a long line of commenta-

tors. Out of this study new facts have come to light, such as those concerning dates, punctuation, theatrical customs, play piracy, and unauthorized publication. The discussion has involved two other early *Hamlet* texts. One is the lost *Hamlet*, a revenge tragedy, known before 1589, referred to in Elizabethan literature, and generally believed to have been the work of Kyd and the play upon which Shakespeare elaborated his *Hamlet*. The other is an early German adaptation, preserved in a manuscript of 1710, *Der bestrafte Brudermord*, which bears resemblances to both the First and Second Quartos. Among the many questions precipitated by the discovery and study of the First Quarto, two have attracted particular attention: How was the First Quarto procured? What does the First Quarto represent?

The present discussion hopes to support in the light of the stage the thesis that the First Quarto represents an acting edition which was excised from the full play represented in the 1604 Quarto and that it is not an adaptation of an early sketch of the play. In other words, Shakespeare having become interested in the old Hamlet story elaborated it to a long reading drama, possibly to satisfy his desire for expression and with no thought of immediate publication, and from this full text an acting copy was formed which was played in 1601 or 1602, became immediately popular, was pirated and surreptitiously printed for profit in 1603. This 1603 Quarto, although in a most mutilated condition, sustains through its fragmentary and distorted speeches the same action that we find in all the *Hamlet* acting editions which have been excised from the Folio or Second Quarto or from a combination of the two. Reversely, this combined text of the Folio and Second Quarto which meets all

the qualifications of a reading text, retains the passages which are cast aside today in forming an acting text and which do not appear in the First Quarto.

The theories concerning the procuring of the 1603 Quarto have more nearly arrived at a concensus of opinion than the theories of its identification. That this Quarto was pirated and surreptitiously printed, all scholars generally agree. Whether it was stolen from an unfinished manuscript or transcribed at a performance, scholars have not agreed. That it was taken in part at least from a play at the time of a performance is a theory which has developed to modern acceptance. James Payne Collier in his edition of Shakespeare, 1854, says that the Quarto "may have been stolen from the author's notes but it appears to have been printed from an imperfect manuscript of the prompt book, or playhouse copy." Although he said in this preface, "It is next to impossible that it can have been taken down during a performance," yet three years later he announced his newly conceived theory that the 1603 Quarto had been taken in shorthand at a performance. [1] As Collier had practiced shorthand for years, he cited with some authority such examples as when Horatio says to Hamlet,

> "And we think it writ down in our duty
> To let you know it."

The words *writ down* are supplanted in the First Quarto by *right done*, two expressions represented in shorthand by exactly the same marks. In the same year Tycho Mommsen pointed out the elaborate stage directions in the First Quarto as significant of a stage copy. [2] He believed

[1] *Athenaeum*, 1856 p. 1221 ff.
[2] *Athenaeum*, Feb. 1857.

that this copy was made by an actor who wrote illegibly, putting down what he could remember; or a bad poet, who was probably a bookseller's hack, furnishing the copy with probably additional blunders by the compositor. The mistakes which appear to have come from mishearing, he attributes to the actor, those which were the fault of seeing, to the poet.

As early as 1862 Richard Grant White advanced the theory that an actor who played Voltimand was bribed to give the lines he could remember, which naturally were his own lines and those spoken while he was on the stage. Henry David Gray later presented a similar theory but argued that the bribed actor was the man who played Marcellus.[3] In 1880 Gustav Tanger in his paper on the *Hamlet* texts before the Shakespeare Society refers to the stage directions in the First Quarto as suggestive that the copy was taken at a performance and points out that the text was such a one as a "speculative individual has been able to elaborate from notes" so taken.[4]

Furnivall says in his preface to the Griggs Facsimile of the first edition of *Hamlet*. "That this Quarto...publisht in 1603 was a piracy, the state of its text proves to every reader. That is was due to the shorthand writers or note takers of the time (of whom Heywood complains), with possibly some parts bought or got from some players, is evident too. That it had an editor or botcher who not only strung together but *revised* the notes and parts handed over to him, and wrote any substantial part of this first Quarto, I cannot conceive, from the extraordinary breaks-off and

[3] *Mod. Lang. Notes.* Vol. 33, pp. 73-79.
[4] *N. S. S. Trans.* 1880-1886. IX. p. 109ff.

mistakes that have been left in the text. And I conclude, that wherever the Quarto of 1603 differed materially in motive or scene—I do not say phrase or word—from the Quarto of 1604, that difference is due either to Shakespeare, or the author of the old play he rewrote, or the mistaking report of one of them by the note-taker or player."[5]

When White published his edition of the Shakespeare tragedies in 1883, he made a full statement in the introduction to *Hamlet* of his conclusion concerning the manner in which he believed the First Quarto was procured: "It was a piratical publication and all the copy was obtained surreptitiously. All the evidence in regard to it goes to show that it was procured through the bad faith of some minor actor in Shakespeare's theater; partly from notes taken down during the performance; in some passages from actors' copies of their parts; in others from the feeble memory of some person who could not understand what Shakespeare wrote, and who yet undertook to supply from his poor brain what he could recollect and, when all these sources failed, from an old play, many lines of which were made to do duty for the corresponding passages in Shakespeare's drama."[6] J. Dover Wilson and R. Crompton Rhodes three decades later declared their belief that while the bad quartos were made up of the transcriptions of the actors parts, which were assembled under the guidance of the "platt," the First Quarto of *Hamlet* was put together by a pirate reporter, a hireling of the company, who doubled parts not only playing Voltimand and Marcellus but also the second grave digger, one of the traveling players, the priest, and one of the

[5]Forewords, *Hamlet Q1*, p. v. (London: Griggs)
[6]*Tragedies*, p. 512 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1883)

English ambassadors; and, furthermore, that he drew upon a transcript of an abridged copy of the 1593 *Hamlet*, which had been shortened for playing in the provinces.[7] Joseph Quincy Adams in his recent life of Shakespeare supports this theory and adds a soldier in Fortinbras' army to the rôles played by the pirate actor.[8]

The general concensus of opinion, therefore, now is that the First Quarto was procured surreptitiously from a performance and that the confusion of the text may be attributed to scriveners' errors, and to the faulty stenography, poor memory, and ignorance of the pirate who probably played several of the parts and also appropriated lines from the earlier familiar *Hamlet*.

Although so much has been agreed upon as to the manner in which the First Quarto was procured, the second question, concerning the identification, still remains unanswered. The speculation concerning the identity of this Quarto is reduced to two theories; either the text which the pirate-actor attempted to reproduce was an early sketch of the play which Shakespeare gave to the publishers in 1604, or it was an excised edition which had been abbreviated and adapted for stage purposes from the completed drama. On these points scholars are yet far at variance.

In proof of the early sketch theory there is brought forth the fuller characterization in the Second Quarto, the additional dialogue, the more detailed historical setting, the elaboration of the play scene, the broken passages, the changed names, the more complete description, the parenthetical

[7] *London Times*, July 19, 1919.

[8] *Life of William Shakespeare*, p. 307 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1923).

explanation, the more philosophy and the more poetry. These points severally are met by the oposing side, who, believing that the play represented in the 1603 Quarto is the only *Hamlet* Shakespeare ever wrote, use much the same material to prove that the Quarto in question represents an excision made from the finished drama.

That the First Quarto is but a preliminary sketch of the complete drama as we find it in the Second Quarto is the conclusion recorded as early as 1832 by Caldecott in the preface to his edition of Shakespeare where he says that the First Quarto "which was afterwards wrought into a splendid drama, is the first conception and comparatively feeble expression of a great mind." He was followed in this theory by many Shakespeare scholars, among whom may be mentioned Knight, Delius, Elze, Staunton, Dyce, Dowden, Furnivall, Widgery, and Sir Sidney Lee.

Of this early sketch the Cambridge editors speak in some detail; "There was an old play on the story of Hamlet, some portions of which are still preserved in Q1; that about the year 1602 Shakespeare took this and began to render it for the stage as he had done with other plays; that Q1 represents the play after it had been retouched by him to a *certain extent*, but before his alterations were complete; and that in Q2 we have for the first time the Hamlet of Shakespeare."[9]

Dowden gives an alternative when he says, "Either a considerable portion of the old play is included in the Quarto of 1603, or that Quarto imperfectly and often erroneously exhibits Shakespeare's work in a form which he subsequently revised and altered."[10] Dyce speaks with more affirmation,

[9]Introduction, *Hamlet*. Clarendon Press.
[10]Introduction, *Hamlet*, p. xvii.

"It seems certain that in the Quarto of 1603 we have Shakespeare's first conception of the play," and after enumerating the differences between the First and Second Quartos, he concludes, "All this fully ascertains the play to have undergone a thorough recasting from what it was when the copy of 1603 was taken."[11]

Supporting this early sketch theory, Furnivall points out in the Second Quarto the gentler character of Laertes and the more positive character of the Queen, who in the First Quarto resembles the Queen mother in the *Hystorie of Hamlet*. Of the changed names, Corambis and Montano, Furnivall believes they were transferred to the First Quarto from an earlier play and changed in the Second Quarto just as Shakespeare changed the names from the old *Taming of the Shrew* to the new, Fernando and Sander becoming in the Shakespeare comedy Petruchio and Grumio. Furnivall further suggests that in 1604 when Shakespeare "was probably working on *Othello* in which he used the name Montano, he'd be sure to take it out of Hamlet."

These "vital changes of character, name, scene, speech and phrase," Furnivall concludes, "will convince the student that he has in Q1 the representation—however muddled—of the first cast of Shakespeare's play, and not of the complete second cast that Q2—by itself, or helpt by the Folio—contains."[12]

"It is unfortunate," says W. H. Widgery in his Harness prize essay on Hamlet, "that the esthetic feeling which will

[11]Introduction, *Hamlet*, 2nd ed., 1866.

[12]Forewords, *Hamlet Q1*, p. vi. (London: Griggs).

[13]*The First Quarto Edition of Hamlet*, p. 182 (London: Smith, Elder, 1880).

chiefly influence a man in his appreciation of a work of art, should be precisely that one which is least communicable. To believe that the First Quarto is an early sketch appears to me an overwhelming necessity."[13]

C. H. Herford also in a Harness prize essay makes a more conservative conclusion: "The actors now desiring to publish the true and perfect copy, Shakespeare first made a thorough revision of the text he had partly revised before and made (probably) considerable additions, as well as some omissions and changes; of which the omissions are the best, and the additions the least well established."[14] Sir Sidney Lee testifies, "In all probability it [the First Quarto] was a piratical and carelessly transcribed copy of Shakespeare's first draft of the play, in which he drew largely on the older piece."[15] The older piece which is frequently accounted a source from which Shakespeare largely transferred material, has been fully discussed by Gregor Sarrazin.[16] Ashley H. Thorndike also discusses this *Ur-Hamlet* in his thesis that the popularity of the revenge type of tragedy influenced Shakespeare to cater to the popular taste and recreate the mad prince dallying with vengeance.[17] While the *Ur-Hamlet* is believed to be the source of Shakespeare's completed drama, the amount of its text incorporated in the complete *Hamlet* is variously estimated.

A few examples which are cited as proof of the early sketch theory may illustrate further the arguments made

[14]*The First Quarto of Hamlet*, p. 86 (London: 1880).

[15]*Life of William Shakespeare*, p. 182 (London: Smith, Elder, 1899).

[16]*Thomas Kyd und sein Kreis*, (Berlin: Felber, 1892).

[17]*The Relation of Hamlet to Contemporary Revenge Plays*, pp. 125-220, Mod. Lang. Assn. 1902.

by the adherents to the theory. Charlton Lewis speaks of Shakespeare's higher estimate of Hamlet's character in the Second Quarto, quoting the lines addressed to Horatio in which Hamlet shows his deliberative justice,

> "Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon
> .....is't not perfect conscience,
> To quit him with this arm?"

Of this passage Professor Lewis says, "It is fairly clear that the omission in the First Quarto was not the printer's or stenographer's fault; the speech was not written till after Shakespeare revised the play, for it occurs in a wholly new scene." The passage is, however, an integral part of the scene in which Hamlet tells Horatio of the fate of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, information which in the First Quarto Horatio receives by letter. As the letter substituted for the dialogue would eliminate much of the text, this passage might easily fall within an omission made naturally in the compression for a stage copy.

In the First Quarto certain broken passages are left which to some scholars have seemed sketchy outlines to be filled in later. Such a remnant appears in the 1603 Quarto when Polonius speaks specifically,

> "Ofelia, receive none of his letters,
> For lover's lines are snares to entrap the heart."

In the 1604 Quarto the advising father says,

> ".....From this time
> Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence:
> Set your entreatment at a higher rate
> Than a command to parley."

[18] *Genesis of Hamlet*, p. 29ff. (New York: Holt, 1907).

And later on in the same Quarto, when Hamlet has shown his distraction, Polonius asks Ophelia if she has given the Prince any hard words, and she replies,

> "No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
> "I did repél his letters."

This command about the letters had been given in the earlier version but was not spoken in the Second Quarto. Professor Lewis suggests that this omission signifies a revision of the first draft of the play.[19] The broken reference, on the contrary, may be as logically taken to indicate that the Quarto of 1603 represents an excised copy taken from a more complete manuscript from which also both the Second Quarto and the Folio were adapted.

Among the transferred passages as signifying rewriting, Professor Lewis points out the line,

"Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind."

This line Ophelia speaks in the First Quarto after Hamlet's rant, when he commands her to go to a nunnery, but in the Second Quarto she says it before the ranting. Such a transference seems a most natural mistake if the copy were written by a stenographer with the help of some actor who merely recalled the lines.

Not only the altered names, the lesser characterization, the broken and transferred passages are brought forward as proof that the early Quarto is a sketch, but the transformation of the lines spoken by the Duke and Duchess in the First Quarto to the verses of the Player King and Player Queen in the Second Quarto is cited as convincing evidence of the revision of the Second Quarto. Marcel Schwob and Eugene Moraud in the introduction to their prose transla-

[19] Ibid. p. 25.

tion of Hamlet say, "L' étrangeté de cette substitution appelle l'examen. Pourquoi Shakespeare a-t-il remplacé de jolis vers par une strophe pompeuse et vide? C'est ici que se manifeste clairement le délicat travail d'art du poète. Il avait à faire jouer une pièce dans une pièce, et il fallait que sur une scène des acteurs parusent être des acteurs. Si les vers qu' ils prononçaient étaient du même style que le langage ordinaire de la pièce, il y avait, si on peut dire, une faute de perspective: le texte de la pièce enclavée être approprié à ses tréteaux, représentés sur d'autres trèteaux. Shakespeare n'hesita donc pas à supprimer la période du Premier Quarto pour la remplacer par des vers du gongoriques à dessein. La même remarque s'applique au reste des vers du *Meutre de Gonzague* et sans doute aussi au monologue "The rugged Pyrrhus," dont le style est d'une archäisme marqué. Ce sont là des remaniements d'auteur, Shakespeare n'aurait pas practiqué de si minitieuses transformations sur une oevre de Kyd."[20]

Dr. Edward Vinning speaks in much the same tone of this play scene: "When rewriting the tragedy, our poet felt the necessity of more distinctly separating this mimic play from the body of the drama, and, by intensifying the feeling that it was a play, of so intensifying the feeling that the surroundings were those of real life. So he carefully and unsparingly pruned out the beauty of the lines and for them substituted the... jog trot." Dr. Vinning asks if it would be possible for "any actor who put down from memory a sketch of the original play as it was acted, and who wrote very illegibly, or any "bad poet, most probably a bookseller's hack," to "mangle" the Second Quarto line,

[20]*La Tragique Histoire d'Hamlet.* (Paris: 1900.)

"My operant Powers their Functions leave to do,"
into,

"And now the blood that filled my youthful veines
Runs weakly in their pipes, and all the straines
Of musicke, which whilome pleased mine eare,
Is now a burthen that Age cannot beare."

Others scholars, however, have regarded the play scene differently and have found no ridicule or bombast in the Second Quarto lines. Coleridge says, "This admirable substitution of the epic for the dramatic, giving such a reality to the impassioned dramatic diction of Shakespeare's own dialogue, and authorized, too, by the actual style of the tragedies before his time, is well worthy of notice. The fancy that a burlesque was intended, sinks below criticism; the lines as epic narrative are superb."[22] Schlegel expresses an opinion similar to that of Coleridge. A. C. Bradley gives four arguments supporting his thesis that Shakespeare did not write these lines in ridicule.[23] Whatever their quality may be, their fulness must suggest either an amplifying for the Second Quarto or an excision for the First.

Among those scholars who have held that the First Quarto was formed from the completed drama are Frederick Fleay, Halliwell-Phillips, Richard Grant White, Gustav Tanger, Tycho Mommsen, William Creizenach, J. Dover Wilson and Joseph Quincy Adams. Fleay with his usual fecundity of invention professes to a theory that when a play was written and licensed at least three copies were

[21] *Bankside Shakespeare*, Vol. XI. p. xii.

[22] *Literary Remains*, p. 158. (New York: Harpers, 1884.)

[23] *Shakespearean Tragedies*, p. 413n. (New York: Macmillan, 1916.)

made, one for the archives of the theater, one with notes added for the manager, and one with many excisions for the prompter. The Second Quarto was, according to this theory, a revision of the complete copy kept in tact in the theater, and the First Quarto was a copy of the prompt book of the same early text.[24]

Halliwell-Phillips gives his conclusion that, "There seems ....to be only one thing that can be reconciled with all the known facts, namely, that Shakespeare's Hamlet existed only in one copy which was tampered with from time to time by the players to suit the exigencies of the stage, and that the edition of 1603 was partially, and the editions of 1604 and 1623 wholly taken from the same copy in different playhouse states."[25]

The year following the discovery of the second copy of the 1603 Quarto, Tycho Mommsen sent to the *Athenaeum* a synopsis of his argument that the First Quarto, although a mutilated edition, represents an acting version made from the full play.[26] This synopsis is given in fifteen enumerations, some of which are: that the text shows inconsistence of action, owing to omissions, or transferences, as well as to alterations which indicate foreign interpolations; that it was improbable a young author would write the shorter form in the first draft; that deviations were less in the beginning of the play as the scribes' patience had not yet become tried; that many vulgarisms and passages of particular energy are retained; that there is a want of metaphorical language; that there are blunders in scansion and metre;

[24] *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, p. 193. (London: Nimmo, 1886.)
[25] *Memoranda.* (London: 1879.)
[26] *Athenaeum*, Feb. 1857.

tautologous insertions; and omissions, which appear in the ligatures connecting authentic passages. Of the differences in characterizations, he says, "This might as well be explained from their being more imperfectly got, in the notes, on account of certain peculiarities of the actors who personated them, or the writer's being less acquainted with some scenes, as upon the supposition that Shakespeare ever afterwards retouched or remodelled any of their characters."

Richard Grant White treated the relation of the First and Second Quartos quite exhaustively, supporting the thesis that "the First Quarto represents, in a mutilated form and with many interpolations, the only Hamlet Shakespeare ever wrote."[27] Of omissions which leave passages unexplained, he cites the lines in the first scene where the ghost disappears, and Marcellus says,

"We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence."

There had been no show of violence in the First Quarto but the edition of 1604 had the preceding lines,

"Mar: Shall I strike it with my partisan?
Hor: Do, if it will not stand."

Another significant omission in the First Quarto is from the King's speech where he says he will drink to Hamlet and throw an union in the cup; the Second Quarto has the speech with the word *unice* for the Folio word *union*. In the First Quarto, although this speech of the King's is omitted, Hamlet says,

"Come! Drink! Here lies thy union here."

[27] *Atlantic*, pp. 467-478. Oct. 1881.

In this example White also thinks he sees conclusive evidence that the text of the Folio and that of the mutilated First Quarto had an identical origin. White sees misplacement rather than an outline for development in the transference of the ghost's lines which attest the love of King Hamlet for Gertrude,

> "Whose love was of that dignity
> That it went hand in hand even with the vow
> I made to her in marriage."

These lines are transferred in the First Quarto to the closet scene where they become a part of the speech of Hamlet when he contrasts the love his father gave with that of Claudius. In any text a transferred passage is more indicative of an alteration than of a stage in the course of the construction of the play.

The soliloquies, which Fleay says are the stronghold for those who believe the First Quarto was taken by reporters, White uses in support of his theory that the abridged text represents an excision from the full play. He says of the death soliloquy what he has said just before of the "O that this too much griev'd and sallied flesh," "that every thought and almost every phrase of the perfect speech have their representatives in the version of 1603, which it would yet be beyond even Shakespeare's mastery of thought and language to 'develop' into the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy as we know it." He continues, "Some of the most profoundly thoughtful passages in the play—passages most indicative of maturity and intellect and wide observation of life—are found essentially complete, although grossly and almost ludicrously corrupted in the first imperfect version of

the tragedy. White also points out that "Throughout the play the cues which would be written out on the parts of the minor actors are identical in both texts. There could hardly be better circumstantial evidence of the identity of the originals of the two texts, or the manner in which the text of 1603 was obtained. It is to be remarked also that rhyming couplets and tags at the ends of the scenes are generally identical in both versions."[28]

The introduction of Fortinbras and his army, in IV. iv, without the subsequent dialogue and soliloquy, White thinks, "is a moral impossibility which overrides all other arguments." While Gustav Tanger sees in this omission a cutting for theatrical purposes from the complete text, he believes that the abbreviation was made by Shakespeare himself. Tanger says, "had another been commissioned to shorten the piece and adapt it to the requirements of the stage, he would have been sure to drop the whole scene. Shakespeare knew better. He remembered that the Norwegian affair was, as it were, the background or rather the frame surrounding the whole action, and the link between the internal troubles of the Danish Court and the outer world."[29]

In the paper in which Tanger made this observation, he cited several broken passages as indicative that the First Quarto was an excision from the full play. For example, Horatio in the first scene, reviewing the international relation between Denmark and Norway, concludes that young Fortinbras' determination to recover the lands his father lost

[28] *Bankside Shakespeare*, Vol. XI. Introduction p. cxxxi.
[29] *N. S. S. Trans.*, 1880-1886, Vol. IX. p. 109ff.

> "Is the main motive of our preparations,
> The source of this our watch and the chief head
> Of this post-haste and romage in the land."

This long passage is represented in the First Quarto by only one garbled line, "And this (I take it) is the Chiefe head and ground of this our watch," the text omitting all that came before telling the nature of the enterprise to which this line must refer.

In the discussion of the names which differ in the two Quartos, Tanger sees only deficiency in the reporting. He says that as the King and Queen were not called by their names in the First Quarto, the pirate-reporter did not know them when the second scene opened and therefore the text has the stage direction, "Enter King, Queen." And, further, as the name *Claudius* does not appear in the text, the reporter failed to reproduce it, but the name *Gertrude* which is spoken several times he easily transcribes. Of the other names Tanger says, "X in the hurry of taking down his notes, failed to hear the name Polonius distinctly enough to note it down in its correct form. If we consider that to X, Polonius must have seemed a subordinate character as compared with Hamlet, Ophelia, the King, the Queen, and Horatio, and that we meet with partial distortions in the names of Gilderstone, Rosencroft, Voltemar, Cornelia, and Leartes; that the name of Ostrick is entirely wanting in Q1; that in like manner the name of Francisco, which also occurs only once in the opening of the piece, has not been caught by X, we may safely infer that *Corambis* is nothing but a distortion of the true name of *Polonius*, especially as he was busy taking down his notes. Observe that both words are trisyllabic, that both have an *o* in the first syllable

containing the nasal consonant, and that both names have an *s* for their final consonant." All of Tanger's discussion relies upon the thesis "that X, an individual more speculative than clever, assisted by a friend, took down the notes in the theater, and worked them out at home." He concluded his paper with a restatement, "The First Quarto is nothing but a mutilated, garbled, and interpolated reproduction of the authentic Hamlet, such as a speculative individual had been able to elaborate from notes which had been taken down during the representation of the adapted Q2 version for the purpose of putting forth a surreptitious edition of the successful tragedy."[80]

Mommsen thought the changed names might be accounted for by the reporter's abbreviation in writing *Cor.* for courtier, and *Mon.* for Polonius' man, and later elaborating his notes into the names Corambis and Montano. Creizenach[81] regards the variation in the names as of no significance to the early sketch theory; the omission of some names and the misspelling of others he ascribes merely to the limitations of the stenographer in the circumstance of taking notes, such as we find within the text itself, as *oosell* for *Ossa* and *arganian* for *Hyrcanian.*

Westenholz also points out changed words which to him were errors in the transcription of the text. Some he thought were the fault of hearing, or writing, or printing; others were the result of attempting to substitute a word, or phrase, for a longer portion of the text. In a study of the

[80] *Tycho Mommsen,* Athenaeum, Feb. 1857.

[81] *The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare,* p. 420. (Phila.: Lippincott, 1916.)

two Quartos Westenholz concludes that the priority belongs absolutely to the 1604 Quarto. He sees in Quarto One the fixed outline of the 1604 play, but believes the abbreviated text to have been fashioned with a red pencil for a theater copy.[82]

Creizenach also adds his testimony with those who believe that the First Quarto represents a version taken from the complete drama. He says, "One cannot doubt that in the case of dramas as long as Hamlet, the part gave free rein to his [Shakespeare's] genius, and that for acting purposes the cuts were subsequently made so as to bring the play down to the required length."

Elise Deckner argues that a unified dramatic plan which originated in the Second Quarto is seen in the First Quarto.[83] Although he bases his thesis on the inferences which may be drawn from the resemblance that the dramatic action of *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* has to that of the First Quarto, he cites interesting examples of broken passages in the First Quarto which add to the evidence that that text was not the first adaptation of the play. The Second Quarto, I. iv. 69ff., has the lines,

> "What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
> Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
> That beetles o'er his base into the sea,"

while the First Quarto gives the passage omitting the second line. Such an abridgment leaves the last line entirely meaningless and must indicate a corrupt text, carelessly written or printed, rather than an outline or sketch to be later elaborated.

[82] *Englische Studien, Die Hamlet Quartos,* Band 34, p. 337ff. (Leipzig: 1904).

[83] *Die beiden ersten Hamlet Quartos,* p. 3 (Berlin: 1909).

P. A. Daniel allies himself firmly with those who believe that the First Quarto represents a shortened version of the complete play. Ashley H. Thorndike says that "So far as the action goes, the spectators saw little that was new in the final Hamlet"; and of the Ophelia scenes in the two Quartos, "The matter is the same but the arrangement is altogether different—facts which may suggest to some that the scenes in Q1 are only garbled versions of scenes to which Shakespeare had already given the final form in Q2."[34] George Pierce Baker cites in parallel columns from the First and Second Quartos pages which show, he says, that "a skillful hand seems in column one to have cut details from column two, which, though interesting in themselves, delay the essential movement of the scene and help to swell the whole play to undue proportions."[35]

C. W. Wallace in arguing that the Folio text antedates the First Quarto indirectly attests the priority of the Second to the First Quarto. He says of the exclusive Folio passage on the children's companies, "I accept it as a conclusion now beyond debate that the whole passage in Fol, was written in 1601 and first acted by the closing months of that year or the opening of 1602, the only period in the history of the drama and the stage at which the allusions could have point or fit the facts."[36] He continues, "The 1603 Quarto, admitted on both sides of a long controversy to be at least maimed and mutilated, contains no reference to the innovation and inhibition, but does give in four lines a general summarized sense of the twenty lines (325-345) found first in the 1623 folio...We no longer need to rely upon the

[34] *Hamlet and Contemporary Revenge Plays*, p. 174 (Mod. Lang. Asso. 1902).

[35] *Dramatic Technique*, p. 358 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1919).

four-line summary in the 1603 Quarto as a sole proof that the complete passage (315-345) was in the play as originally acted; for, as seen, the passage in its entirety fits the facts of no other period than the close of 1601 and the opening of 1602."[37] The Children of the Queen's Chapel, who took over Blackfriars Theater and began giving public performances late in 1600 or early in 1601, won such great popularity that they forced the Chamberlain's Company to close the Globe and go on a tour through the provinces. Joseph Quincy Adams[38] says that while this fact is not clearly proved it seems true from contemporary references and the record cited by A. W. Pollard of the Chamberlain's Company acting in Aberdeen late in October 1601.[39] In support of the supposition that the popularity of the Children's Company closed the Globe Theater, Professor Adams refers to the concluding lines of the exclusive Folio passage on the "little eyases," where Hamlet asks, "Do the boys carry it away?" and Rosencrantz answers, "Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too." The four lines in the First Quarto which Professor Wallace says give a "general summarized sense" of the Folio passage on the "late innovation" are;

> "Yfaith, my lord novelty carries it away,
> For the principal public audience that
> Came to them are turned to private plays
> And to the humor of children."

[36] *The Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars*, p. 174 (Lincoln: 1908).

[37] *The Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars*, pp. 182, 183. (Lincoln: 1908.)

[38] *Life of William Shakespeare*, pp. 299, 300. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1923.)

[39] *Shakespeare's Folios and Quartos*, p. 73. (London: Methuen, 1909.)

If we accept the conclusions of these modern scholars that the text from which the *Hamlet* Folio was taken was in existence before 1603 and that the First Quarto lines which refer to the Children's Company give us a summarized sense of the twenty lines in the 1623 text, then we may conclude that the general identity of the Second Quarto and the First Folio would make possible and probable the existence of the complete text before the acting version represented in the 1603 Quarto was formed and would confute the theory that the First Quarto represents an early sketch of the play from which the Second was elaborated. If as Professor Thorndike says the allusion to the children might have come at any time from 1600 to 1603, the mention in Quarto One of the children actors may be interpreted either as a reference which was later elaborated, or as an excision from the complete text, but such a reference would scarcely be worth elaboration for a stage copy after the years of acute feeling had passed.

J. Dover Wilson also argues that the manuscript from which the First Folio was taken was in existence before the 1603 Quarto. In proof he cites lines 73, 74, I. ii. which in the First and Second Quartos and the Folio are identical except for a variation in the spelling of three words and a substitution in Quarto One of *chiefe* for *best* and *general* for *generous* which appear in the Second Quarto and Folio. He says, "This knot showing in all three proves that each was made of wood from the same tree." Professor Wilson also sees in the place of the entrance of Volemar in the First Quarto, and in the punctuation for rhetorical effect of Volemar's speech such parallelism between the First Quarto

and the Folio that he concludes that the playhouse copy from which the Folio text was derived must have been in existence in 1603.[40]

Having considered a few opinions of scholars who believe that the First Quarto represents merely an early sketch and of others who hold that the play represented in the First Quarto was excised from the completed play represented in the Second Quarto, we will not accumulate testimony from the lecture hall but turn to our thesis that the coincidence between the dramaturgic elements of the First Quarto and those of the modern acting versions of *Hamlet* support the theory that the First Quarto represents an acting version excised from the complete play as represented in the Second Quarto.

While the great mass of scholarship on the Quartos has presented interesting and valuable data, cited facts, and offered examples, we still find a confliction of contentions which have arrived at no final conclusion. Studying the modern acting versions of *Hamlet*, we may use the facts of the stage to throw light on a stage problem, for these texts reveal the purposes of the actor and the demands of the theater. The manifold gleaning from the harvest of acting texts from Betterton's day to our own, is no mere collocation of the use and elision of words, phrases, lines, and scenes. This gleaning not only illustrates the principles of dramatic construction and adaptation but also has a deeper histrionic significance of the ruling of the dramatic instinct.

This dramatic instinct, selecting the action of the play for presentment, is revealed so clearly in the history of the *Hamlet* text that I have chosen this tragedy from among the

[40]*The Library*, 1918. IX. pp. 181-182.

others for particular study. We have seen that *Hamlet* at no time has been much altered except by excisions. Even the Betterton text, which omitted Polonius' counsel to Laertes, Hamlet's first awed address to his father's spirit, and the advice to the Players, interpolated no lines and made no transference of scenes. The great liberty taken with the text by Garrick, which he made the more notorious by withholding his version from publication, was chiefly the liberty of excision in omitting the popular grave-yard scene. The few lines he originated were almost immediately discarded. The modern Hamlets read an absolutely pure text although an abbreviated one.

The dramas represented in the other abridged and imperfect First Quartos, either through their character of thought, their condition of preservation, their adaptability, or their degree of popularity, do not make so logical a base for comparison as the *Hamlet* text. The First Quarto of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* contains much vulgarity not used in modern times; the First Quarto of *Henry V* is greatly abridged and the play in any form is seldom acted; *Richard III* until the last century was played only in the Cibber version; *King Lear,* o'er-toppling with an abundance and enjambment of poetry and philosophy, appeals to the reader more than to the actor; *Pericles* is not adapted to the modern stage; and the full play of *Romeo and Juliet* with its ample poetry and its frequent low comedy scenes, has offered to actors during the centuries a variety of adaptations and alterations. A composite of the adaptations of any one of these dramas would not prove of interesting or convincing significance. But a composite of the acting

versions of *Hamlet* would be strongly indicative because of the loyalty to the original text from the Restoration to the Tercentenary, because of the frequent performances in all periods, and because of the many actors who have played the Prince and have individually arranged their texts from the full reading version. The value of the evidence offered by the acting texts of *Hamlet* lies in their cumulative force. As Kemble said[41] that you could know the popularity of *Hamlet* to be greater than any other of the dramas by noticing that in every volume of the Shakespeare plays that portion containing *Hamlet* would be the most worn, so in the history of the stage it is the *Hamlet* performance that is most frequently recorded. Rarely does a tragedian forego the fascination of playing the Danish Prince, which is essayed more than any other Shakespeare rôle. I have listed more than one hundred names of actors who have played the part, sixteen having been women. The value of the Hamlet texts is further enhanced by the interesting fact that the great Hamlets have almost invariably prepared their own acting versions with careful discrimination, showing a differing nicety in the selection of scenes, lines, and words, and yet producing texts with a decided general semblance. According to the individual taste of the actors, they have made excisions to shorten time, to reduce cost, to eliminate scenic changes, to emphasize characterization, and to put aside vulgarisms and obscure passages, and yet the important parts of the version have held together tenaciously through the centuries. This labor, however, of selecting and discriminating words has been expended on a play which

[41] James Boaden, *Life of John Philip Kemble*, p. 51. (Phila.: Small, 1825.)

could carry the story by its action alone. Brander Matthews has said that Hamlet could be played in pantomime before deaf mutes and be perfectly understood.[42] It is this action which the adapter of the text seems to recognize instinctively and grasp and hold in all stage versions.

That the First Quarto, so imperfect in the transcription of its lines and so dramatic in the embodiment and sequence of its action, represents a stage version all now generally agree. On the other hand the Second Quarto, greatly enlarged and augmented with additional dialogue and lines of introspection for the elucidation of character, with historical setting elaborated to give reason and balance to the troubled condition of the royal house, with more description, explanation, philosophy and poetry, seems as evidently a typical example of a drama written to be read, written to seize upon the imagination and purge the soul in hours of quiet meditation. W. W. Greg, believing that the Second Quarto was written for the library, says, "Shakespeare built upon the foundations of an earlier piece of Kyd or somebody, rewriting and revising probably more than once, and it is clear that in doing so he got carried away by his interest in the story, and allowed his work to burst the bounds of its theatrical limitations. The length of the play is excessive; it would almost make two pieces of ordinary dimensions. As a practical dramatist Shakespeare must have known that it could never be performed in its entirety, even under the most favorable conditions of the great London theaters. We know that, in fact, it was mercilessly cut by

[42] *A Study of the Drama*, p. 20. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1910.)

the company for which it was written. In composition Shakespeare *must* have had in mind readers as well as spectators; he must have written for the closet as well as for the stage."[43]

From this full reading drama through three hundred years actors have formed their texts, which have shown coincidence of action, episode, and characterization with the same elements in the First Quarto. Before considering, however, the modern acting texts in detail, let us glance back at the German adaptation, *Der bestrafte Brudermord*, and see if any significance attaches to it for this discussion. The points in common between this German play and the First and Second Quartos of *Hamlet* have been cited in various dissertations as significant of the time of the composition of the German play, of its immediate source, and of its common authorship with that of the English *Hamlet*. Furnival says, "To believe that the old *Hamlet* of 1589 was the original both of the Qto of 1603 and the German play, is to me impossible, for it involves the supposition that the old play was both longer, and in some points better, than both its copies, and that Shakespeare went back to it to improve his Quarto of 1603 by it; which is absurd.[44] Creizenach enumerates nineteen points which are common to both the German play and the Second Quarto and concludes that the German play represents a stage version of the Second Quarto which in turn was made from a text which embraced both the First and Second Quartos.[45] Tanger, who pointed out the relationship of scenes in the First Quarto and *Der Brudermord*, believed with Dyce, Boas, Furnivall,

[43] *Hamlet's Hallucination*, p. 420 Mod. Lang. Rev. Vol. 12.
[44] Forewords, *Hamlet Q1*, pp. x. xi. (London: W. Griggs.)

and others that *Der Brudermord* was directly based on the First Quarto. There are not enough facts known regarding the lost *Hamlet* to make a comparison of it with the modern acting versions, but *Der bestrafte Brudermord,* retaining, with some alterations and adaptations undoubtedly made for the German theater, virtually the same dramatic situations that appear in the First Quarto, thus adds testimony that the actor in all times and for all countries selects the dramatic features of a play for a stage text, and that in the *Hamlet* acting versions these dramatic portions have been practically the same as those represented in the First Quarto.

It is to be admitted that the varying Quartos of the Shakespeare plays suggest alterations for different presentations. The company about the king may have preferred the longer plays, the oratory in the resounding speeches, and the elaboration of character and of scenic effects. Blackfriars and the Globe may have offered different opportunities, as the lighting and seating differed. Actors out of the company by temporary absence or permanent leave may have necessitated the lengthening or shortening of certain parts. Strolling actors whose capacity reached a little beyond the farcial scenes may have required such an abridgment as we find in the First Quartos of *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor.* Rôles proving popular at a first performance may have been lengthened for a second, as appears to have been the case in *Romeo and Juliet* with the part of the nurse, which is considerably augmented in the Second Quarto.

[45]Berichte der philol.-hist. Classe der Königl. Sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, pp. 1-32, 1886.

A similar condition in the manipulation of an acting text exists today. In the usual course of procedure, a new play receives both additions and omissions during its first season. Sometimes a play is precipitated on the stage before the author considers his text complete. Dion Boucicault's *London Assurance* had to be put on the stage before the speeches were all worked out. Much was improvised. Happy phrases, particularly in the part of Lady Gay Spanker, were later incorporated. Three weeks passed before the prompt book was complete. Thus the filling lines of long speeches, quibbling dialogue, and philosophical discussion, may be changed for different occasions, but the outline of the action, for the most part, remains the same. Contemporary plays, which have not yet come into print but are securely preserved in the archives of the theater in large type-written sheets, often show many defacements by slight alterations made for different performances. If one of these manuscripts which has been in use should go to a careless publisher and be printed as he received it, uncorrected, or as transcribed surreptitiously by the stenographer, the text would show variations from the original which would be as striking as the changed names and altered characters in the *Hamlet* of 1603

Noticing, however, the tenacity with which the important parts of the *Hamlet* acting versions have held together through the years; giving consideration to such omissions as have been made of passages which were devised technically for the Elizabethan stage and are not necessitated since the introduction of the drop curtain, of those lines of local color written for Elizabethans but meaningless to the modern audience, and of those vulgarities hailed by the pit of the

Globe but unheard in the modern theater; we find a startling parallelism between the thought and incidents of the First Quarto and the modern acting versions. This conformity signifies that a dramatic art, an absolute power, creates today from the full reading version a player's text which in the action retained and the character emphasis given, so closely resembles the First Quarto that we may infer that the play represented in the First Quarto was similarly formed by selecting the most dramatic scenes and passages from the complete *Hamlet* text.

But putting aside for the present any influences which would add to the evidence by increasing the number of coinciding lines omitted by both the First Quarto and the modern acting versions, and disregarding the variations in the First Quarto which are apparently the blunders of memory, of the senses, and of the scrivener's work, let us consider the actual number of lines omitted from the various texts and see how many of these line omissions are identical.

As people who count lines have different methods of enumeration, I have found it necessary in making a comparison of the texts to rely on my own method in order that my enumerating may be uniform. Because of the comprehensive text of the Globe edition of *Hamlet*, which includes the lines of both the Second Quarto and the Folio, and because its accurate numbering has been used so widely in books of reference, I have taken this text as a basis in computing the lines omitted from various versions. Following the numbering of the Globe, I have counted as half lines any broken lines which are attached to full lines, but no isolated broken line containing less than three words.

This Globe edition of Hamlet, according to its own numbers, contains 3930 lines. Booth's acting version omits 1254; of these lines, 948 are the same which the First Quarto lacks. Forbes Robertson's text omits 1258 lines, 965 of which are identical with the lines omitted in the First Quarto. Sothern's text omits 1279 lines, of which 939 are the same as those lacking in the First Quarto. The text of Irving, although he says it requires four hours for performance, omits 1327 lines, of which 1011 are the identical omissions of the 1603 Quarto. Hampden's text, which is the shortest I have examined, omits 1409 lines, of which 939 are the same as those left out of the First Quarto. These figures show that the modern actors have dropped about seventy-five per cent of the lines which are omitted in the First Quarto. Kemble, Macready, and Forrest with their followers made similar omissions, and Betterton and Wilks, who played pure texts but retained slightly more lines than the modern actors, followed much the same course of action. This coincidence of line omissions suggests an actor's discrimination against certain passages for acting purposes. While it is improbable that Booth was in any conscious manner influenced by the 1603 Quarto, Irving was familiar with it and inserted lines from it in his text. E. S. Willard, Wilson Barrett, and Sir Beerbohm Tree announced that they had studied and used the First Quarto in the formation of their texts. As the First Quarto was not available for general study when Booth published his version, we may conclude that his seventy-five per cent. of omissions which are identical with the omissions in the First Quarto were cast aside by the same absolute art seeking in the longer text for the most dramatic expression of the

Hamlet story. "Even in Shakespeare's time," says Swinburne, "the actors threw out his additions; they throw out these very same additions in our own."[46]

Not only in these parallel line omissions is there a strong significance that the dramatic instinct in shortening the play chose similar portions to cast aside, but a still greater significance attaches to the similarity between the First Quarto and the modern acting versions in the characterization, the compression of certain scenes and passages, the retention of fragmentary lines, the arrangement of episodes, and the coincidence of cues and tags.

Most of the characters are introduced in a similar manner by name in both the First Quarto and the modern acting versions. Horatio and Marcellus are so saluted by the watch. In the first scene before the royal presence, the King calls out by name Laertes, Hamlet, Cornelius, and Voltimand. Laertes in the modern acting versions gives his warning to Ophelia, "Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister," which places her before the audience; in the First Quarto the gist of this one introductory line and the name of Ophelia are retained although the long speech by Laertes is shortened to nine lines, a condensation like that in the modern acting version, which usually retains about twelve of the thirty-four lines. When held in the modern acting version the scene of Polonius sending the spy on Laertes has Reynaldo addressed by Polonius as is Montano in the likewise abbreviated scene in the First Quarto. The introduction of Lucianus is the same verbatim in all editions. The sailors do not appear in the First Quarto and are almost never seen on the modern stage. Although Osric is name-

[46] *A Study in Shakespeare*, p. 164. (New York: Scribner, 1895.)

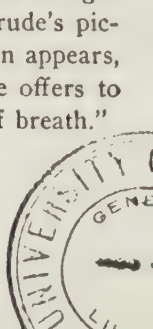
less in the First Quarto where he is known as the "Braggart Gentleman," his character is introduced there, as in all later versions, by Hamlet calling him a water-fly. The three appearances of the ghost are also announced in the same manner respectively in the Quartos and the modern acting versions.

The characterization of Hamlet, which is affected both by the lines he speaks and by those spoken about him, is similar in the First Quarto and the modern acting versions. Although the player of the Prince always gives him a conspicuously large proportion of the text, yet there are actors' omissions in the spoken lines of Hamlet which lie closely parallel with the omissions in the First Quarto. The flippancy of Hamlet's manner, whether it was assumed to counterfeit insanity, or was the natural outburst of his youth and smoldering joyfulness, is lessened in both the First Quarto and the modern acting versions by omissions from his conversations with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, especially in the scene where they come to bid him to his mother's presence, and later when they inquire of his disposal of Polonius' body; from conversations with Horatio, like the dialogue in the grave-yard, where Hamlet speculated for ten lines on the possibility of the skull having belonged to a courtier, and in the fourteen lines on the nemesis of a land-buyer's pate coming to be filled with dirt; and by the omission, also of the two touches of vulgarity spoken to Ophelia in the play scene. Hamlet's personal appearance is slightly changed by the First Quarto omission of his reference to his "customary suits of solemn black" and his "windy suspiration of forced breath," an omission which is likewise made in the texts of Kemble, Macready, Kean,

Booth, Irving, Forrest, and Wilson Barrett. A vehemence of character is lost in the First Quarto and the modern acting versions by the excision of several of Hamlet's rank accusations made to his mother in the closet scene; of lines in his last conversation with her before his departure for England, when he says, " 'tis the sport to have the enginer hoist his own petar" and " 'tis most sweet when in one line two crafts directly meet"; and of his avowed determination to do evil and hold his thoughts bloody. In the letter to Horatio Hamlet tells of his valorously grappling with the pirates, but this incident of action and courage is not narrated in the First Quarto and I have found it in only seven acting texts. A complexity in the character of the Prince is also removed when the First Quarto and the modern acting versions omit in the beginning of the last scene about seventy-five lines which include Hamlet's confession of his own treachery in consigning his erstwhile friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to death, and the passage which reveals the vacillating nature of Hamlet and his procrastination in taking revenge after he has been convinced that Claudius not only murdered the late King, but also designed the betrayal in the trip to England. Casting aside, as do most of the acting versions as well as the First Quarto, the passage where Hamlet says that "Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes," we lose a glimpse of his philosophy of life; and his lines on Denmark being one of the worst dungeons in the prison of the world, a sinister shadow of his pessimism. The stage Hamlet, furthermore, is less mad than the library Prince. One of the most crucial passages in the whole play regarding the mental condition of the prince is his apology that his rashness has

been because of a sore distraction with which he is punished, and that madness is poor Hamlet's enemy, and yet this self-confession, or self-interpretation, does not appear in the First Quarto or in the modern acting versions; its omission removes much of the perplexing contradiction in the character of the Prince. By the omissions common to the First Quarto and the modern acting versions Hamlet is less religious than we find him in the reading version, and also less interested in the affairs of state. He gives his last thought in the full version for the welfare of Denmark, recommending with his dying voice Fortinbras as his successor. But this line of loyalty although retained by Betterton, Wilks, Sothern, and Forbes Robertson, has usually gone with the other excisions which take so much from the complex of Hamlet's character. The omissions, therefore, in the First Quarto which simplify the character of Hamlet are generally the same which are omitted from the acting versions and present a Prince on the stage more direct and open, more easily understood than the Hamlet of the library.

Among the lines spoken about Hamlet which are omitted in the First Quarto and the modern acting versions and thus change his characterization are Laertes' suggestion to Ophelia of the fickleness of the Prince, and the subserviency of his choice of a wife to the demands of his royal position; Polonius' scorn of the blazes which must not be taken for fire; the King's comment on the inward and outward changes that have come over our "cousin Hamlet"; Gertrude's picture of his terror in the closet when the apparition appears, and her solicitude for him in the duel when she offers to wipe his brow saying that he is "fat and scant of breath."



So much then being detracted from the Hamlet rôle, which is emphasized by the proportion of its lines in all texts, it is not surprising to find the lines of the lesser characters greatly abbreviated in the shortened texts of the First Quarto and the acting versions. No one of the dramatis personae suffers more from abridgment than does the King, both in degree of importance as an acting part and also in the quality of his character. In the Second Quarto the King has a spark of conscience that disturbs the clod; he is a political force in his dealings with other countries; he is a diplomat in his own circle. In the First Quarto and in the most of the acting versions he does not say that Fortinbras looks upon his worth as weak and the state under his command to be disjoint and out of frame, that Laertes cannot speak of reason to him and lose his voice, that it is weakness and a fault against heaven to continue to mourn for the death of fathers; he does not speak the courteous line of thanks to "Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern," or the compliment to Polonius as the "father of good news"; he does not acknowledge a conscience smarting under the lash of Polonius' speech on hypocrisy, or recognize the ugliness of his own painted words; though he attempts to pray, he does not speak later the reflective lines enumerating the sorrows coming in battalions which give him a superfluous death, or philosophize on love, duty, and revenge; he does not excuse his inaction in avenging Polonius' death by telling Laertes of his great love for Gertrude, who lives almost by Hamlet's looks, or of his fear of the common people, who bear the Prince great love; neither to Laertes does he say that he will not suffer these injuries and deem them pastime; he is not compared to the

late King as a satyr to Hyperion. Claudius' fearfulness lest the duel should miscarry, and lest Ophelia's death should arouse Laertes' wrath, which he with such great effort had calmed, is also omitted.

To these common omissions concerning Claudius a few exceptions may be made. Walter Hampden permits the King's courtesy spoken to Laertes in the second scene; Booth, Wilson Barrett, and Hampden, by retaining III. i. 48-54, show Claudius' smarting, suffering conscience. Waiving such slight exceptions to the coincidence of lines omitted by the First Quarto and the acting versions, we see Claudius on the stage today similar in characterization to the King played in that early performance represented by the First Quarto.

The difference in the character of Gertrude in the First and Second Quartos lies chiefly in the different requests made of her by Hamlet in the two editions. In the First he asks her to assist him in obtaining revenge for King Hamlet's murder; in the Second he entreats her to keep the secret that he is feigning madness. In each the mother yields a willing assent to the request of her son and in a following scene shows her endeavor to keep her promise. The reading versions having accepted the Second Quarto portrait and the First Quarto having been long unavailable, there has been until recently no choice for the actor. There is no doubt, however, that the First Quarto arrangement would make a stronger acting part for Gertrude. The Queen's surprise in the closet, when Hamlet first suggests that the late King has been murdered, is as great in the one version as in the other and is more dependent on Gertrude's business in reading than in the lines themselves. All her

omissions in the First Quarto seem to have met with more variable acceptance by the actors than the lines of other characters. Betterton, Wilks, Irving, and Forbes Robertton ignore her confession that she sees black spots in her soul; Betterton, Wilks, Kemble, Macready, Young, Kean, Wallack, Forrest, Booth, Irving, Sothern, and Hampden omit her line that Hamlet's words are like daggers to her; and Booth, Irving, and Sothern, her inquiry what the act is "that roars so loud, and thunders in the index." These excisions make Gertrude less guilty, more the character she is in the First Quarto.

George P. Baker has pointed out that the Queen begging Hamlet to remain at home and not return to Wittenberg, an importunity which is in the First Quarto and the Folio but not in the Second Quarto, adds another thread of interest to the scene, causing Hamlet to speak alone to his mother his loving and fair reply and thereby introducing an effective emotion.[47] This First Quarto situation, omitted in the Second Quarto but retained in the Folio, appears in all acting editions.

While the altered characterization in the First Quarto is similar to the character changes in the modern acting versions, other parallelisms also suggest alterations made for stage effect from the full play. Among these alterations are the transferred passages. When Ophelia is half through relating to Polonius her fright at the appearance and action of Hamlet in her chamber, Polonius interrupts with the question, "Mad for thy love?" This line and the reply of Ophelia, Booth transferred to follow at the close of her speech fourteen lines later—a transference which

[47] *Dramatic Technique*, p. 252. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1919.)

put the lines in the same sequence as that in the first Quarto. Booth evidently felt that the first thought of Polonius was to learn the cause of Ophelia's fright, as is shown in all editions when he asks immediately, "What said he?"; but not until after Ophelia had told her father of how the Prince had held her hard and then stood away from her, stared at her, shook her arm, and sighed so piteously as if his emotion would shatter him and end his being, did Polonius arrive at his suspicion that madness accounted for Hamlet's condition. While the Quarto lines are more brief through this episode, their sequence of thought is the same as that followed by Booth. The noteable transference in the 1603 Quarto, that of the death soliloquy and the following dialogue with Ophelia transferred from the third act to the second, was made by Willard, Wilson Barrett, Sarah Bernhardt, and Beerbohm Tree, as preferable to its usual position in the Second Quarto. Of this transference William Winter says it has "the actor's reason—that it enabled him to create a strong effect at an earlier time in his performance." When Hamlet enters his mother's closet, Forbes Robertson has him call, "Mother, mother, mother," and immediately inquire of the Queen, "What's the matter?" In the complete version Gertrude speaks two lines to Polonius after she hears within Hamlet's thrice spoken "Mother." Irving and Forrest omitted the calls off stage, as did most of their predecessors, thus like Forbes Robertson leaving the lines nearer to the arrangement in the First Quarto. While the ghost's lines, regarding the late King's love and cherishing care for Gertrude, which are transferred in the First Quarto to the closet scene and spoken by Hamlet, have not been so transferred in later editions, they

were expunged by Booth and Forbes Robertson, and nearly two centuries earlier by Wilks. The lines are fully as effective in the First Quarto position where they may have been placed by the mistake of an actor, or, just as probably, by the desire of an actor who played Hamlet to appropriate the resounding lines and thus augment his own speech and add to the contrast he was drawing. In the fourth act when Laertes arrives vituperating, "O thou vile King, Give me my father!," he enters the royal presence in the First Quarto immediately after the stage direction, "noise within," but in the Second Quarto nearly twenty lines later; acting versions show varying arrangements here, but all in some degree omit these intervening lines. Hamlet's lines comparing Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to sponges, Irving restored, but transferred them from their place following the inquiry of these friends for the whereabouts of the body of Polonius to III. ii. 389, where they become a part of Hamlet's scorn of the futile efforts of these courtiers to play upon him and learn the secret of his conduct. These sponge lines are seldom read on the stage, but in restoring them Irving placed them in their logical position for a condensed stage version, a position which is the same as that in the First Quarto. Most acting versions omit more or less of the last part of the closet scene. Hampden in restoring lines 213-215 which concern the disposal of Polonius' body, first bids his mother good night and omits the second "good night" in line 217, a sequence also followed in the First Quarto.

Much has been said of the difference in the quality of the poetry in the Players' scene in the First and Second Quartos, as if this difference indicated that Shakespeare, having a

new conception of how the play within the play should be versified, rewrote the drama and discarded the fine poetry of the Duke and Duchess substituting for it the "doggerel" of the Player King and Player Queen. As the lines of this scene in the First Quarto are very meager, and less than a dozen can have any pretense to fine poetry, so slight a change as the omission of these few lines would not necessarily indicate more than an excision, at the most, in the finished play. The four First Quarto lines on the blood which runs weakly in the pipes, and the strains of music which whilom pleased the ear, have been cited as too beautiful for the contrast desired by Shakespeare in the speeches of the strolling players. But these beautiful lines are so few and so capped with bad verse that their omission from the later versions would seem but slight ground for proof of the early sketch theory. The speeches of these mock players, moreover, are recited on the stage in an elocutionary style that would make jog-trot of the death soliloquy. Whether the Second Quarto lines are doggerel, or, as Coleridge says, fine epic narrative, they are retained in the modern acting versions only in a number closely corresponding to the lines in the First Quarto. What the First Quarto retains of the First Player's trial speeches appear virtually the same in the Second Quarto, the Second Quarto, however, containing nearly forty lines more. The shortening of these passages in the modern acting versions is similar to that in the First Quarto. The First Player's speech, which Polonius complains of as too long, is cut from thirty to six lines in the First Quarto; in all acting versions it is curtailed about half, not so striking a coincidence as that found between the other speeches. The Duchess, who is

named in the Second Quarto the Player Queen, speaks only ten lines against the Player Queen's twenty-seven, but these ten, which are composed of five closely rhyming couplets, are repeated almost verbatim and are only slightly fewer than the Player Queen's lines in the modern acting versions. The Duke in the First Quarto speaks only fifteen lines while the Player King delivers himself of forty-five. His "jog-trot" verse beginning,

> "Purpose is but the slave of memory
> Of violent Birth and poor vitality,"

and closing,

> "But orderly to end, where I begun,
> Our Willes and Fates do so contrary run,"

composes nearly half of all that the Player King says and is not contained in the abbreviated lines of the Duke at all. All these omissions are conspicuously parallel in the modern acting versions, which riddle the lines of the Players' scene as destructively as did the First Quarto. Of the Player King's 45 lines the text of Wilks, Kemble, Forrest, Macready, Kean, Young, or Hampden shows only 15, the same number that the Duke spoke in the First Quarto; Forbes Robertson reads 16, and Irving and Sothern read 19. Hampden's text has not only the same number as the First Quarto, but it follows the same breaks in the dialogue, and so far as the accepted reading version has retained the First Quarto lines, Hampden's text follows them in all but three. Where the Duchess speaks only 10 lines, Forbes Robertson's Player Queen speaks the same number, Forrest's and Hampden's speak 11, and Irving's, Sothern's, and Wilson Barrett's 12. Or again, the First Quarto omits 52 lines which are printed in the complete version; of these Hampden

omits 42, Sothern, Forbes Robertson, and Wilson Barrett omit 40, and Irving 38 a rather suggestive evidence of the estimated value on the stage of the full lines of the Players' scene. The dumb show, which is omitted altogether in the modern acting version, has only one-third as much business specified in the First Quarto as in the full edition. Betterton's text, which gives this pantomime, is abbreviated much as in the First Quarto. The omission of the dumb show in the modern acting texts is possibly to be accounted for by the fact that this form of spectacle, popular in its day, has through long disuse become obsolete. The increased interest which the dumb show gives in the library to the character of Claudius would be lost on the stage where the action is rapid and the audience has not time to study the King's change of countenance sufficiently to note the fine effect of his effort to appear unconcerned. Halliwell-Phillips, however, suggests that Claudius is absorbed in conversation and does not see the dumb show. J. Dover Wilson and others believe the same. W. W. Greg daringly says that Claudius did not kill the King by pouring poison in his ear and therefore took no alarm at the dumb show; W. W. Lawrence refutes this theory. Henry David Gray agrees that Claudius saw the dumb show but, as he had not anticipated it, the momentary action did not impress him. Professor Gray thinks the purpose of the dumb show was to avoid too explicit argument, to give the flavor of local color, and possibly to whet the curiosity as to what the King would do in the face of such a revelation; all of which does add to the interest of the play in the library but for the abbreviated text on the stage would cause a needless repetition.

While the Player's scene is so much abridged in the First Quarto and the modern acting versions, it is interesting to notice that Lucianus' lines supposed by Sievers, Bradley and others to be the fragment "of some dozen or sixteen lines" which Hamlet inserted to form the poison speech—the climax to the episode—are always read on the stage and are identical in the First and Second Quartos. That the number and character of lines throughout the scene are so generally the same in the various texts of the actors and in the First Quarto would indicate selection then as now for an abbreviated stage copy from the completed drama.

Those omissions in the First Quarto leaving a trailing detachment have been cited as examples which mark places where an excision has been made rather than one where an outline has been sketched. Some of these broken passages are repeated identically in the modern acting versions. One is the omission of Marcellus' line which asks if he shall strike the ghost with his partizan, and the retained conclusion of the reason for the apparition's disappearance.

"We do it wrong, being so majestical
To offer it the show of violence,"

no wrong having been indicated in this text. While White sees in this remnant proof that the First Quarto represents a text cut from the complete version, we, in finding this identical omission repeated in the acting texts of Kemble, Macready, Forrest, Wallack, Young, Conway, and Irving, conclude that these actors making their excisions from the full text carelessly left this remnant just as did the hypothetical adapter who cut the text in the First Quarto from the

full copy. Thus through the unconscious testimony of the modern theater-text is White's argument corroborated. Booth and Wilson Barrett also excised the "partizan line," but they consistently omitted Marcellus' succeeding remark about the show of violence and the vain blows.

In White's argument that the First Quarto was an abbreviation of the Second, he cites, also, the identity in the two versions of the cues of the minor actors and the rhyming couplets and tags at the ends of the scenes. Although the technical use of the rhymed couplet to mark the changes on the stage is no longer necessitated by the condition of the theater and the character of the audience, yet most of these couplets in the *Hamlet* text have been retained in the modern acting versions. If such identical lines hold for an argument that the First Quarto is an abridged version of the Second, then, when we find these same rhymes retained by the modern actor who has formed his text from the full Shakespeare play in a time when such rhymes are not necessary to mark changes, it is suggestive that the same professional instinct or dramatic intention which guided the modern actor also guided an early adapter who cut from the complete drama the text which the First Quarto represents. As ridicule was cast on the rhyming couplet, we find Shakespeare using it less and less in his later dramas. Though *Hamlet* has twenty scenic divisions, only ten are marked by closely rhyming couplets; four others have the couplets partially disguised by an added line. The ten couplets in the Second Quarto which are the same in the First remain almost always in the modern acting versions. The two couplets which have not always been retained were incorporated in scenes originally adapted for a technical

purpose, scenes which the modern stage no longer necessitates. One of these at the end of the closet scene falls within a usual long curtailment of thirty-five lines, but in the texts which retain the most of the scene, as those of Betterton, Wilks, Forbes Robertson and Hampden, the couplet is also retained. The other couplet in question is next to the final line of the play and although retained by Betterton and Wilks has been omitted in other texts. Waiving the technical reasons for these two couplets and the fact of their survival in several texts, we still find that the modern acting versions retain eighty per cent of the rhymed scene endings which were retained in the acting version represented in the First Quarto.

While the coincidence of such technical words is strongly suggestive, there is possibly no great significance in the choice an actor makes of single words which differ in the two Quartos, for he usually adapts his text from a reading version and naturally accepts the amended word before him. The possessive *your* in Hamlet's early speech to Horatio,

> "There are more things in heaven and earth
> Than are dreampt of in your philosophy,

appears in both the First and Second Quartos and is usually adopted in the modern acting versions. Forrest and Irving, however, used the Folio word *our*. But in the player's text when the ghost tells Hamlet he could a tale unfold of the nether regions which would make his "hair to stand on end like quills upon the fretful porpentine," there may have been a conscious choice of the adjective, the actors having so generally retained the First Quarto word, *fearful*. Polonius' pun on the mouse-trap in the First Quarto is *trapically*, not

tropically as in the Second Quarto and Folio. Wilson Barrett substituted the First Quarto pun as preferable. Words which agree in the First Quarto and the Folio but are not in the Second Quarto are usually retained in the modern acting texts. A few such words are italicized in the following: "or he to *Hecuba*.....We'll een to it like *French* falconers.... But who *O who* had seen the mobled queen....may be a *devil;* and the *devil* hath power."

There is more significance of choice for an acting copy when we find parallel lines retained in the First Quarto and the modern acting texts from such passages as are otherwise altered or much excised. Among such may be cited lines 36, 37, from Laertes, warning to Ophelia in I. iii.,

> "The chariest maid is prodigal enough
> If she unmask her beauty to the moon."

In short passages omitted from portions usually retained we often find also an interesting parallelism between the specific lines cast aside by the First Quarto and the modern acting versions. Among such are II. i. 103-106, from Polonius' advice to Ophelia of the violent love which leads to violent undertakings; 111-113, Polonius' regret that he had not better "quoted" the Prince; II. ii. 515, on the arrival of the ambassadors, and Polonius' discovery of the head and source of Hamlet's distemper; 131-139 excised entirely by Sothern and variously by other actors; 231-277 of which most actors omit all except Rosencrantz' remark that the world is growing honest and Hamlet's repartee that doomsday is near; 281-282, "and sure my friends, my thanks are too dear a half penny," excised by most actors from a passage otherwise in tact; 354-359, of little eyasses; 496-519,

of which all is omitted except the ten-line simile on silence before a storm likened to Pyrrhus' pause; and from the closet scene the last twenty lines which are generally omitted from the modern acting texts and are represented in the First Quarto by only two lines which permit the accompanying action of dragging away Polonius' body.

In the Second Quarto, furthermore, the long additions which lend atmosphere, setting, and philosophy, are passages generally omitted in the acting versions. In the first scene lines 108-125, in which Bernardo reaffirms that the ghost is like the King that was and is the cause of the wars and Horatio reviews the prologue to the calamities in Rome, are omitted by all actors except Betterton, Wilks, and Hampden, who retained four lines, and Sothern, who retained one line; in the fourth scene the twenty-two lines on Danish drunkeness are omitted by all actors except Forbes Robertson who retained seven lines; IV. iv. 9-66 omitted by all except Beerbohm Tree who read thirty-four lines but transferred them to the third act; IV. vii. 69-82, of Claudius' consent that Laertes shall be the organ for vengeance, omitted by Wilson Barrett, all but one line omitted by Forbes Robertson, and only small fragments retained by other actors; IV. vii. 115-124, Claudius' philosophy on goodness growing to a pleurisy and his quibbling on *would* and *should* have been omitted by all actors from Betterton to Hampden inclusive; V. ii. 110-150, Osric's praise of Laertes, of which twenty-five lines are omitted by Kemble, Macready, Forrest, Wallack, Kean, Young, Forbes Robertson, Irving, and Sothern; and V. ii. 203-218, the lord's interview with Hamlet, omitted by all modern actors, Betterton and Wilks having retained it.

Thus by a comparison of the modern acting versions of *Hamlet* cut from the complete text we find such a close agreement with the First Quarto that the text represented in the First Quarto seems to have been formed likewise from the full drama which appeared in print a year later. The parts of coincidence between the First Quarto and the modern acting versions may be summed up as those including the similarity in the length of the play, in the long passages excised, in the great percentage of identical lines omitted, in the arrangement of lines in shortened episodes, in transferred passages, in ragged remnants where excisions have been made, in single important words, in the length and lines of the Players' scene, in the scene-ending couplets retained, and above all in the delineation of characters.

We, therefore, conclude that the same art which through three hundred years has chosen for the stage from the full *Hamlet* text a concise dramatic story so similar to that one represented in the First Quarto guided also an early adapter, who from the complete text represented in the 1604 Quarto cast aside that large portion of the text which is also unused today by actors, and arranged a version which has been preserved for us in the mutilated text of the 1603 Quarto. Thus the supposition seems a truth that the First Quarto was neither an early sketch of the play nor a piratical report of an early sketch but a piratical report of an acting text excised from the full drama which was in existence when the text of 1603 was formed and which was the source rather than the fulfillment of the abbreviated play.

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